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# ARCHITECTURE DESIGNED TO KEEP HOMELESS PEOPLE AWAY

TJ JOHNSTON

Last December, the San Francisco Department of Public Works placed boulders at the site of a tent settlement near Cesar Chavez Street and Potrero Avenue to prevent homeless people from putting up tents.

This latest development in the City’s attempts of removing encampments drew media attention and criticism from homeless advocates, including comparison to a London apartment building with 17-inch long spikes embedded in the



pavement by the building’s alcove.

In 2016, an area beneath a San Diego highway overpass was strewn with jagged rocks creating enough of an obstacle for people trying to lie down, but apparently still passable for baseball fans to go to nearby Petco Field for the MLB All-Star Game.

While such tactics of erecting structural outdoor barriers drew world-wide attention, other implementations of “hostile architecture” or “anti-homeless design” have long been in place, many of which are hidden in plain sight and likely to be in your neighborhood.

No matter how subtle, such design still serves as an impediment to homeless people unable to sit or lie down anywhere else.

As San Francisco Chronicle columnist Caille Millner noted in 2015, “Once you start seeing anti-homeless design, you can’t stop seeing it.” Judging by the photos of hostile architecture that Street Sheet readers shared after the Coalition on Homelessness-published paper put out a call for photos of hostile architecture, these examples appear to be widespread and persistently visible.

Last year, City employees erected barricades around the Eureka Valley library branch during its outdoor redesign to prevent

encampments. Later, they were removed because it violated the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. However, that didn’t stop the City from landscaping the area near the entrance of the Castro District-serving branch with sloping, rock-studded hillocks and sharp-edged stumps jutting from the surface.

Some benches around San Francisco are equipped with built-in obstructions; outside the former Rincon Center post office are benches that are are folded up and locked at the end of the day, thwarting any after-hours reclining, and the ones at Union Square have armrests in the middle, achieving the same effect. Spikes adorn the planter boxes outside the Upper Market Safeway store. Last month, the Department of Public Works also erected barricades around the store’s perimeter.

Anti-homeless design isn’t just limited to visual deterrents; sound has also been used as a “keep out” tactic. In 2012, the Bill Graham Civic Auditorium resorted to blaring the sounds of jackhammers, motorcycles and other industrial noise through its PA system to keep unhoused people from sheltering themselves beneath the alcove of its entrance.

Less effective was the Burger King near Grove and Market streets. The classical music used to ward off homeless people failed; more complaints about the amplified music

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## SHELTER WAITLIST UPDATE:

As of January 31st there are **1,066 people** waiting for shelter in San Francisco



# STOP DEPORTATIONS

Guide from Coleman Advocates

You’ve probably heard talk that the feds are planning massive ICE raids in Northern California. The potential raids would be a blatant political attack against sanctuary cities, centering on the Bay Area. Up to 1,500 immigrants could be taken from our families and our communities.

Here are three ways you can respond with power not panic:

1. Text RESIST to 41411 for emergency action alerts through Bay Resistance
2. Share these local rapid response hotlines to report ICE activity and get support
  - San Francisco: (415) 200-1548
  - Alameda County: (510) 241-4011 (also taking Contra Costa calls for now)
  - San Mateo (+ SF, Oakland, Berkeley): (203) 666-4472
  - Santa Clara County: (408) 290-1144
  - Marin County: (415) 991-4545
  - North Bay (Sonoma, Solano): (707) 800-4544
  - Sacramento: (916) 245-6773
  - Santa Cruz County: (831) 239-4289
  - Monterey County: (831) 643-5255
  - Fresno and Central Valley: (559) 206-0151
3. Thanks to the work of SEIU USWW and others, California passed AB 450 last year which offers stronger protections for immigrants at their workplace. Learn about workplace rights under AB 450.

AGGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

came from housed residents living about the fast-food outlet.

When examined long enough, hostile architecture (anti-homeless design) appears to pick up where increased policing and “move along” orders leave off, making outdoor spaces less inviting to those who live or spend most of their days outdoors.

That appears to be the direction that U.S. cities are taking, Allison

Arieff wrote in a New York Times op-ed last October. The editorial director of the SPUR urban planning organization cited the removal of park benches from plazas in the Mid-Market neighborhood as an example. Such tactics to inconvenience street people put growing disparities on display, she said.

“Inequality is escalating,” Arieff wrote, “and these spaces make that reality visible.” ■

# ASK US ANYTHING COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS

HAVE A QUESTION YOU WANT US TO ANSWER ABOUT HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING IN THE BAY AREA? ASK US AT STREETSHEET@COHSF.ORG OR (415) 346-3740 AND IT COULD BE ANSWERED IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

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The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition's work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: They bring their agenda to us. We then turn that agenda into powerful campaigns that are fleshed out at our work group meetings, where homeless people come together with their other community allies to win housing and human rights for all homeless and poor people.

# STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

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# WORKGROUP MEETINGS

AT 468 TURK STREET

**HOUSING JUSTICE WORK GROUP**  
Every Tuesday at noon  
The Housing Justice Workgroup is working toward a San Francisco in which every human being can have and maintain decent, habitable, safe, and secure housing. This meeting is in English and Spanish and open to everyone!

**HUMAN RIGHTS WORK GROUP**  
Every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.  
The Human Rights Workgroup has been doing some serious heavy lifting on these issues: conducting direct research, outreach to people on the streets, running multiple campaigns, developing policy, staging direct actions, capturing media attention, and so much more. All those down for the cause are welcome to join!

**EVERYONE IS INVITED TO OUR WORK GROUP MEETINGS.**

To learn more about COH workgroup meetings, contact us at : 415-346-3740, or go at : www.cohsf.org

# HUD CUTS THREATEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HOMELESS PROGRAMS

LEO SCHWARTZ

As the government lurched back from a shutdown on January 22, the status of the federal budget remained in flux. President Trump signed another short-term continuing resolution, meaning the government is no closer to settling on final funding numbers despite being months into FY2018. One of the most at-risk agencies is the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and its proposed \$6.8 billion in cuts for affordable housing programs, which would dramatically alter how the United States serves its low-income and homeless populations.

Since appointing Ben Carson as the head of the agency, the Trump Administration has worked to devastate HUD’s influence. In May of 2017, the Trump Administration released its proposed funding levels for HUD, which included \$6,822,500 in cuts to key housing programs. California in par-

ticular would be hit hard by the proposed cuts, which would total almost \$1 billion in lost funding and impact almost 40,000 households per year, according to Affordable Housing online.

Two of the programs most severely impacted by these cuts are the Community Development Block Grant, which oversees programs such as Meals on Wheels and the Housing Choice Voucher program, which helps low-income individuals find affordable housing. The budget also proposes sweeping changes to the nature of the voucher program, including raising tenant contributions, raising the minimum rent and eliminating utility reimbursements.

Other programs at risk include the Public Housing Capital Fund, which is used to fund repairs at public housing properties, and would be cut 68 percent nationwide,

## REST IN POWER, KEITA O’NEIL

Officer Samayoa’s body camera was only recording because he turned it on, in shock, after what happened. When initiated, the camera (dormant prior) provides the thirty seconds of footage before it “went live”. No sound, just video. Video of a one-shot kill through a police car window. One shot, one kill. Great stats for a video-game. The viewer is familiar with similar videos of similarly unjustifiable police killings of black people in America. Thus, the viewer notes, this is not a videogame.

Conversations follow—what was the crime, what was the weapon that Keita held? Alleged carjacking, no weapon. Not a belt of weapons, not the robbery of a life, but, to readers of articles that came up in the aftermath, often, alleged carjacking and no weapon justifies extermination, confirms the biases, the fears, the disgust. Good and moral cops, bad and immoral black body, threat, lost, always too soon, always on external terms.

What, then, is the right moment for lethal force, that which is “required” by law in certain altercations the police must allocate, responsibly, subjectively, as situations which “require” lethal force? It’s worth noting here that Tasers, the latest weapon on the police belt (it’s getting heavier) are not to be used in situations where lethal force is required, though, statistics have shown, as the case of Warren Ragudo displays, the Taser is a lethal

NO NAME

weapon. So that gives police departments across the country a lethal weapon to use when lethal force is “required”, and a lethal weapon to use when lethal force is not “required”. But as evidenced by police killings such as that of Eric Garner, neither the Taser nor the gun are required to exercise lethal force on bodies, black bodies, brown bodies.

The death of Keita O’Neil requires public mourning, public anger, police accountability. The blame is always shifted: “rookie cop”, “poor supervision”, “we didn’t know what he was capable of”—You didn’t know that shooting him with your gun necessitated him dying? A black man running by your car jeopardizes your life, or, then, is it that lethal force is “required” merely because this black man was your responsibility, your requirement, to murder?

This is a letter to Bill Scott, to Christopher Samayoa, to Dennis Herrera, and to Mark Farrell.

Two days following, folks were gathering to mourn Mario Woods. In the same week, Shaleem Tindle was murdered in Oakland, another suspected police homicide. And just last week, as noted, Tasers took the life of Warren Ragudo. Keita’s mother is suing the city. What are you going to do? ■

and Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities, which would be cut 17 percent. These programs all exist to support low-income seniors, people with disabilities, families with children, as well as other vulnerable populations. According to the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP), affordable housing programs and HUD as a whole have been facing funding cuts since 1978, but this level of austerity would be unprecedented.

Compass Family Services, a local organization that helps San Francisco families facing homelessness secure stable housing, illustrated the precariousness of the situation. While they said they have not experienced any funding cuts to date, Erica Kisch—the Compass Family Services Executive Director—said “Our housing program, Compass SF HOME, has Rapid Re-housing grants for \$645,453. If these funds were cut the subsidies and associated staffing on those contracts would go away and Compass could not continue these services with our general funds.”

### DIFFERING BUDGETS

The funding bills proposed by the Senate and House do not entail cuts as drastic as those of the Trump Administration, but they do still fail to adequately address affordable housing needs. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, almost \$20 billion in additional funding would be needed to address rising rents and maintain the crucial Housing Choice Vouchers program. The Senate bill provides just \$1.9 billion more in funding from 2017 and the House bill freezes HUD funding at the 2017 level, which would result in 30,000 and 110,000 housing vouchers not being renewed, respectively. The Trump bill, by contrast, would result in 235,000 vouchers not being renewed.

As the Center explains, the vouchers help over 5.3 million people nationwide and are necessary in making decent housing available in the private market. They are instrumental in reducing homelessness and housing insecurity. With any level of

funding cuts, an already precarious housing crisis would be exacerbated throughout the country.

### A HOLLOW GRANT

HUD released a report in December that found that 553,742 people experienced homelessness on a single night in 2017, a 0.7 percent increase from 2016 and the first uptick in homelessness since 2010. In response, Ben Carson announced a \$2 billion grant for homeless programs, awarded to 7,300 local programs across the country. Programs in California received \$383 million of the funding.

But as Paul Boden, the Executive Director of WRAP, explained, this move was nothing but a public relations move on the part of the Trump Administration. The grants marked just a \$30 million increase in funding for California from 2017. Set against a proposed \$1 billion in statewide HUD cuts, the number is largely meaningless, or as he put it, “HUD and the federal government continue to give out a pretense of caring about homelessness with this miniscule amount of money.”

He also contextualized the way federal grants pit local governments against each other. San Francisco can cheer that they received more than Oakland without having the opportunity to look at the larger picture. According to Boden, “this is hush money for local governments to not give a s\*\*\* about housing cuts because they are all competing for homelessness grants.”

While budget talks and HUD cuts were making national headlines last year, this year they were drowned out by the tax bill debate. The committee overseeing HUD’s appropriations has been quiet, and the government continues to pass temporary funding bills instead of settling final budget numbers. As Boden explained, time will tell if we “pay for these tax cuts on the backs of poor people.” All signs point in that direction. ■

## HOSING DOWN HOMELESS PEOPLE?

DAYTON  
ANDREWS

On the morning of January 3rd, passerbys reported that a group of people were being sprayed with a hose while sleeping in their tents on 16th and Bryant. Members of the Coalition on Homelessness went down there to determine who exactly was spraying folks trying to sleep. Interviewing the people found there, no one spoke on record and there was much confusion as to who they were being sprayed by.

After some time it is confirmed by other folks in the area that DPW was in fact spraying down tents. Upon submitting an information request, we received a field report from the Department of Public works. DPW had been there the morning in question and had described their work in that area as “flushing”.

It is not a proud moment for our city when the Department of Public works fails to even mention the people affected by their actions.

These “Flushings” are happening at a time when the UN rapporteur has recently visited SF. The Rapporteur on housing visits cities across the world, creating reports on informal settlements of people. The Rapporteur had this to say on the conditions in SF, “I have travelled all over the world seeing slums and people living in poverty, but

what I have heard and seen so far here in the US, in just the last few hours, is stunning to me. It's just so... cruel. There is so much hatred towards poor people here”. The rapporteur was referencing the “quality of life” ordinances that affect poor and unhoused people but this attitude is reflected in city policy as well as in the actions of city employees.

“Flushings” are a reminder that the city government thinks of its poor citizens as refuse to be cleared from the street. This can be seen by the increasing level of collaboration between the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, the Department of Public Works, SFPD, California Highway Patrol and the Department of Public Health. Collaborating to house people is good; however, these agencies more frequently support one another during the numerous and less formalized “sweeps” of encampments in our city. These organizations meet monthly in order to strategize moving people and making sure they dont come back. But where are folks supposed to go?

With over a thousand people waiting to get into shelters each night, our city is prioritizing hosing down unhoused people instead of providing adequate shelter and housing. ■



# SELF LOVE AND SURVIVAL

SHYHYENE BROWN

I've been homeless off and on since 2004 here in San Francisco. And through it all I continued to go through my struggle and tribulations, but in 2010 I came back out here with this guy, and to my dismay he truly turned me out in a way I never knew. See, he taught me a lot out here in the streets, and all the while he was hurting and destroying me in the process. Since being homeless I've been stabbed, hurt, belittled, made fun of, had my name dragged in the dirt, my safety compromised, and my well-being put at risk. I have also been to jail as well out here in San Francisco. I've sold drugs, I've also jacked some people I'm not proud of. At the end of the day I'm not proud of it. I slept at bus stops and different hotels around the city; stuff I never thought I would do in a million years I've done. And please, don't think for one second that I'm OK with that, because I'm not.

As a woman out here being homeless, I've suffered a lot more trauma than men do. Since being homeless, my life has been put in jeopardy in more ways than one. I've had my tent burned down with me inside asleep. I've been raped while asleep in my tent. And I've had my fair share of fights out here as well. Even though I'm at the Navigation Center now and I'm inside, it doesn't mean that I'm not homeless at all, because at any point in time I could be back on the streets like I was. And here in the city I'm still classified

as homeless, because it's not permanent housing — it's temporary housing that I'm in. The struggles are still happening even though I'm inside.

Since being homeless I've achieved a lot of things. I've gained my self-respect, my self-confidence, my self love. My higher power (whom I choose to call God) has allowed me to receive my associate's degree in Paralegal Studies. I volunteer at the Coalition on Homelessness and the Street Sheet. I'm currently in school for my bachelor's in Criminal Justice. I also been blessed with a new addition to my family, a daughter. So through my struggles and tribulations I've been blessed with many things. Also, I'm taking up some self-help groups to build my self-esteem back up. So just know that in the end, for women out here who are homeless, it's harder to maintain our sanity and our self-respect even without having people put us down, belittle us, and disrespect us as human beings.

So in closing what I'm saying is this: I've been beaten on, stabbed, shot at, raped, etc. I've also been jumped and ridiculed for being who I am as an individual. I'm still human, with human emotions and feelings. I am who I am, and God made me who I am, and if no one likes me, that's fine, but to kiss ass for someone to like me or respect me for me? I'm not going to let that happen. ■

# BREAK SILENCE

MS. D. GIGANTE

Did you know that the average literacy level is 8th grade in the U.S.A? As a 44-year-old, it was time to Break Silence to literacy at the SF Public Library at Project Read. I have struggled all my life reading and writing with ADHD and Dyslexia. So, what is the average literacy level in a low- income community? Living in SF more than 10 years, I have been uncomfortable reading and signing legal documents. Not understanding what I'm signing year after year. Are we all at risk of becoming victims of housing displacement without even knowing? Regardless of education level, I know that we must Break Silence by educating each other on new housing laws and understanding what is on the ballot that directly affects our low-income community. Let's vote and show that our Black Lives Matter. Break Silence to literacy and our vote does matter! ■

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Why, when I called 911 when my friends and I were victims of another drive-by shooting in public housing, did I have enough time to speak to two family members and an SFPD officer who happened to be a long-time family friend? And there were no sirens. Why was there such a lack of urgency? More than 30 minutes is unacceptable when you're only three blocks away. Are we less important because we are not homeowners or paying market rent? It sure seems like it. If SFPD didn't care about all those black lives lost, why would they care about my blue and green bikes that were stolen on camera? I guess we live on the wrong side of the tracks. We must break silence about the lack of compassion and urgency in SF public housing. We must care about our own black lives to protect and serve our community better by becoming the next generation of SFPD officers. ■



FIG  
HO  
WO

THIS IS ME

JACQUELYNN EVANS

My name is Jacquelynn Evans Gbogboage, and I was born July 4th, 1987. I am a strong African American woman who is the mother of three beautiful children. In my life struggles I have overcome some tremendous things. I've seen things no woman should ever see, things no child should ever have to go through. I've used those as a stepping stone to become the strong woman that I am today.

I have been homeless since the age of 13. I was dragged back and forth through the foster care system being abused, misused, and tossed around like trash. While I have been independent all my life, being pregnant at 16 and still in foster care was a horrible thing. They put us out on my 18th birthday when I had aged out of the system and had become a burden to them since I was no longer worth a paycheck.

I've grown to look at myself as the queen of life. I've conquered the worst experiences and the best, and now I get to put it together to make a beautiful masterpiece of this thing we call life's journey. I look back and cry and laugh at the things I've gone through as experiences to teach myself and other women and children what not to do. The struggles I go through now are just as hard. I'm still fighting the hardship of homelessness now with my family, and it kills me that we can't all fit in our current living situation. Every night I have to pick which child gets to come home.

As a child and as an adult I have been raped, beaten, stabbed, and shot, and none of that has been able to stop my journey or my life. The universe wants me here. God has his plan for unique minds like mine, and I shall not let it waste. Today I am a shelter client advocate, and I enjoy my job 100 percent. I was previously a peer organizer giving back to the community in every way that I think is possible. I look at myself as a strong, independent African American woman with drive to do wonderful things. I found my purpose in life, and it's to help others not get screwed over by the stupid systems that allow people to slip through the cracks and fall into the deep patches of hell.

For anyone trying to understand who I am, I am me, a marvelous empowering woman who gives all she can and expects nothing in return, who strives to bring out the truth even though it may cause her harm, possibly even discomfort and disappointment. I live my life like a crazy person by enjoying it to the fullest extent. Even through all my rough patches, I still choose to see the light because I believe that every person has a destiny, and I'm moving toward mine.

If you would like to know who I am, this is me, and who I will become has yet to take place. Everything I do is a step forward to show the world that one day I may be the president of the United Damn States of Our America because in our world, any and everything is possible. And even if that doesn't happen, me having the belief and willpower to attempt it is the type of woman I am. THIS IS ME. ■

EMPOWERED

JACQUELYNN EVANS, SHELTER CLIENT  
ADVOCATE AT EVICTION DEFENSE  
COLLABORATIVE

Today, we women are literate, educated, and deliberate. Liberated to lead, we surge forward not only in politics but also in social life.

But first of all, we need to understand what empowerment of women really means, what its impact is. Empowerment is about being given authority and power to do something. It's about becoming confident, and stronger. Empowerment again means to be aware of one's rights and privileges and to have the ability to control one's life in a more meaningful and fulfilling way. The term empowerment naturally presupposes a sense of powerlessness, doesn't it? Well for women that has been the case; looking back centuries ago you always find the dark side where women were suppressed and treated as commodities with no voice in decision-making, no role in deciding how the community life evolved.

But empowerment of women is in us, all of us. Every single color, size, religious belief made change come, not without struggle and sacrifice, protest, and conflict just like me. Our transformation has come through many difficulties. This is why we have an obligation as women to keep the empowerment of women going for the future, for our daughters, for our world.

I am a formerly homeless empowered woman who is still currently going through difficulties with housing and my children. I feel the pain of all the women that are still out there, and that is where I draw my strength. We have evolved but we are never done. As women our work is never done, and this is why I am planting the seed now to help things grow, giving women who are less fortunate the opportunity to have the courage to speak up--about things like having more resources for women being viewed as assets and not as liabilities. This has to change if women's empowerment is to become a reality in the fullest sense.

I am empowered, and I want to empower you! Keep San Francisco the San Francisco we love, and show the world our San Francisco values. ■

OUT OF THE WOODS

JENNIFER FRIEDENBACH, EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR AT THE COALITION ON  
HOMELESSNESS

PHOTO CREDIT: ADAM WOLD



When I was just barely 14, I was raped while out on a date by my camp counselor at a sleep-away camp. It's a tragically common story – a young girl wooed by a handsome authority figure she inherently trusted. I thought I was mature and worldly when I explained I was a virgin and was not ready for sex. Turns out it wouldn't have mattered what I said because I was part of some crude game, as the bloody proof of his conquest was put on display as a flag to wave beneath the lovely pines and the firs.

But I consider myself to be so lucky. I am no longer in the woods as I was that night. When I go to bed at night I can close my eyes and relax into the knowledge that my and my children's walls are thick and I have a door I can lock. For hundreds of thousands of women in the United States that is simply not the case – they are out in the woods, in the parks, on the sidewalks, in jails, in tents, in shelters, in cars. They don't have thick walls. They don't have locks to turn.

This past year we have made strident progress drawing attention to the sexual harassment and assault that women face in the workplace. Women with admirable courage transformed their private humiliations into great acts of dignified resistance. These acts were like a sledgehammer driven into the upper tiers of the patriarchy, which have started to crumble. But there is a deafening silence with regards to the street. So silent. So quiet. Like a bloody flag waving in the woods.

For housed women, closing the door means an end to the sexual harassment they face on the streets, and a breath of relief. For homeless women that breath of relief never comes. It never comes.

I think of Patricia who is not so unlike the over 1,200 mothers experiencing homelessness in SF alone. She was put out of a women's center – she was given no blankets for her night in the woods. She sat in a park while her and her children shivered so hard that cold night. Finally, she could not take it and at about 2:00 a.m. she went to her children's father's house. A place she swore she would never return. He brutally beat her in front of her children. The silence surrounding her truth is deafening.

Women become homeless because of racism, poverty, and immoral inaction by our country's

leaders. However, homeless women face another force – intimate partner and childhood sexual violence. Once women become homeless, they find themselves even more vulnerable to violence. They have the trauma of struggling to meet their children's basic needs. They are forced to partner with men out of desperation for safety. They find their physical and mental health may fall apart and turn to drugs and alcohol in despair. They are then condemned and dehumanized, referred to as trash, and policy debates surrounding their existence call for their jailing and institutionalization. They find the shelters full and the waits for housing years and years long.

All women, in fact all humans, have a fundamental right to safe and decent housing, and the solutions lay within that very truth. Our collective resistance as women and ally men MUST include rising up against the federal divestment of housing that caused this crisis in the first place, against the actions of HUD under Trump and against his tax giveaway package, which are all forcing hundreds of thousands more to streets. Our daily resistance must ensure homeless people have a safe place to sleep, shower and thrive.

I think of the very young Latina woman who like me was also camping, but instead of the forest she was forced to camp in the streets of the Mission. She was serial raped one awful night. However, in this situation, instead of silence, her rape was used by a politically ambitious male politician as an excuse to put a mean initiative on the ballot to tear away her tent. She was not consulted as to whether this was a good idea, or as to whether she was more safe sleeping on the concrete, or whether there was room in the shelter for her instead. In fact, no homeless women were consulted, because if they were, they would have heard that as awful as a tent is, it is far better than sleeping exposed on the sidewalk. And, god damn, the cost of just 10 destroyer ships would make sure every human in this country has a real place to call home, and none of us would be forced to sleep in a tent.

As we rip through the silence and demand solutions to the severe poverty and destitution women face in this country – we must turn to those same women to lead us. ■

RIGHT ALONGSIDE  
HOMELESS  
WOMEN

# FAMILY SHELTER UNSAFE FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES

STREET SHEET STAFF

On Monday, January 21st, tensions that had been building for months at First Friendship family shelter erupted in brawl involving multiple shelter staff and a pregnant mother who does not speak English. A number of families were involved and two families were given a Denial of Service, making it impossible for them and their children to return to the shelter, though most said they did not feel safe returning regardless. After the incident, the pregnant mother was followed by four people who stated that they were connected to the shelter staff and jumped and beaten. She received treatment for her injuries in the emergency room.

This shocking incident came as no surprise to the seven families who had been staying at the shelter. For years shelter advocates at the Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC) have been hearing reports about the abhorrent conditions at First Friendship. The shelter has no beds for their 55 guests. Instead the parents and their children, some less than a year old, sleep on mats rolled out on the hard floor. There are no showers provided and parents are forbidden from washing their children in the two tiny bathrooms available.

“Almost every week we hear reports from parents who have been disrespected by shelter staff,” said Nick Kimura, a shelter client advocate with EDC. “Clients report being talked down to, threatened, yelled at. Some have said staff will give them smaller portions or withhold meals as punishment for speaking up. We’ve also gotten reports of staff having sex with clients in exchange for a place to sleep. The staff at First Friendship is consistently unprofessional in their treatment of clients.”

But seven families have banded together to stop the abuse. After this most recent episode, nearly all of the guests at First Friendship have refused to return, and are coping with serious trauma. Together they are fighting to make the city take immediate action.

Jeff Kostisky, the director of the Department of Homelessness, sat down with several of the families in the Coalition on Homelessness office last week.

“Personally, I been homeless for almost a year and a half,” said Amber, one of the mothers who has taken her son out of First Friendship. “So

I’m here because my son’s friend’s mom got hit. And I’m here to make sure they get what they need to move on. I want to know that they will be supported.”

“It’s not okay to be walking by and see families that are sleeping in a tent. It’s not okay to see single people sleep out on the street. It’s not okay for the people trying to recover to be left out on the street. We’re not nobody. San Francisco can’t move forward until they fix the problem that they have.”

Right now the families are being given priority beds at St. Anthony’s until March 1st. After that, they don’t know where they will be sleeping.

“Don’t nobody wanna deal with what’s going on. They wanna get rid of it, sweep it under the rug. Nobody wanna touch it, you know what I mean? And it’s affecting everyone, and I mean everyone who lives here in San Francisco.” said Maxine, who lived with her two children at First Friendship. “I never felt welcome by the staff. Even when I first arrived I didn’t feel welcome. It didn’t feel safe to me. And this whole situation has taken a huge toll on me.” ■

## DEMANDS FROM THE FAMILIES

1. To have a city personnel present at First Friendship to ensure safety of clients and Providence staff.
2. To have DPH Trauma counseling in a space other than First Friendship for the families and children who do not feel safe in that space anymore.
3. To remove all staff who have physically assaulted shelter clients
4. That a new family emergency shelter site be found with new management, a demand also being pressed by the Coalition on Homelessness
5. To receive priority for space in private rooms at shelters not managed by Providence
6. An in-person meeting with the Mayor

## OBITUARY: KATHRYN ALICE “KAY” JORGENSEN

January 9, 1932 – January 15, 2018

Rev. Dr. Kathryn Alice Jorgensen, 86, Unitarian Universalist minister, professional street and theater performance artist, and co-founder of the Faithful Fools Street Ministry in San Francisco, died peacefully after midnight on Monday, January 15th, in Berkeley, CA, surrounded by her children.

Kay, as she was known, was born in 1932 in St. Paul, MN, the elder of two daughters of Dr. Detlof Emanuel Johnson and Alice Otilia Palmquist Johnson. Throughout their lives, Kay and her sister Carolyn faced many adverse situations together. She attended Minnehaha Academy, a Christian school located in Minneapolis, MN and graduated from St. Olaf’s College in Northfield, MN, with a degree in theater and religion. In 1955 she married Ronald Leland Jorgensen, and together they had three children: Andrea, Joel and Erik.

The family lived in various Midwestern states as Ron studied, interned, and did a residency. Kay started a preschool when Andrea was a toddler in Wisconsin. In the early 1960s, when the family was living in Indiana, she had occasion to see the great French mime, Marcel Marceau; she called it a “conversion experience.” From then on she became increasingly drawn to study mime, dance, and clowning. Eventually, Ron took a position as a psychologist in Sioux Falls, SD as their kids went through school. Here, Kay founded a children’s theater called “Fantasia

Folk.”

In 1974 Kay and Ron divorced and she relocated back to Minnesota, where Kay began attending the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis and started a teen mime troupe there. She joined the Orrea Mime Troupe, co-created the Street Circus Company and performed in the Guthrie Theater. Kay later moved to California, working with the San Francisco Mime Troupe and continuing her studies of mime with Carlo Clemente, founder of Dell’Arte International School of Comedy. She performed in San Francisco streets and sidewalks as a mime. By the early 1980s the street artistry scene was becoming less friendly to performers, and Kay was drawn to ministry. She entered Starr King School for the Ministry in Berkeley in 1983, where she received her Master of Divinity degree, serving as intern minister at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley, in Kensington.

After graduation she served seven years as the minister of the Unitarian Universalist church in Maple Grove, MN, until 1995, when she returned to California where her daughter, Andrea, and sister, Carolyn, lived. Kay and Carolyn later in life spent many hours together in reflection, seeking understanding and meaning to their childhood experiences.

Kay began attending the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, walking there through the gritty, urban streets

of the Tenderloin downhill. There she came to know individuals who were homeless or minimally housed and also the people who worked in organizations seeking to alleviate conditions of poverty. With Carmen Barsody, OSF, Kay founded the Faithful Fools Street Ministry in 1998, inviting thousands of others to make “street retreats,” walking through the neighborhood as she and Carmen did, open to the experiences and people they encountered. At the Faithful Fools’ building on Hyde Street, people gathered for arts programs, meditation, and community meetings. In her life and in her work, Kay continued to draw on her skills as a mime and a clown, keeping a clown nose in her pocket to pull out whenever a meeting got too serious, and appearing often at Faithful Fools events as a mysterious Swedish fellow named Oscar, her clown persona.

Kay remained involved in the life of the Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, eventually serving there as Social Justice Minister, seeking always to build connections between the people she served in the congregation and the less privileged people she served in the Tenderloin. As part of her ministry at the church, she supported congregation leaders in founding “Up on Top,” a groundbreaking program that offers afterschool and summer enrichment programs free of charge to children of the Tenderloin neighborhood.

She retired from the church position in 2009, but remained fully engaged in the life of the Faithful Fools. Starr King School for the Ministry bestowed an honorary Doctorate degree on Kay in 2004, noting that her work “affirms that embodied justice and compassion can happen on a daily basis, quietly, personally, emotionally, and with the highest standards of humanity.” In 2015 she received the Patty Lawrence Award for distinguished service to Unitarian Universalism in the Pacific Central District. That year, due to the advanced progression of her Parkinson’s disease, she moved to Chaparral House in Berkeley, where she continued to touch the lives of many, including her new caregivers.

Kay was preceded in death by her beloved sister, Carolyn Johnson. She is survived by her children, Andrea, Joel, and Erik Jorgensen (Melissa Shablott), and Alejandra Brown, by her 20-year partner in ministry, Carmen Barsody, and by the people she and Oscar walked with and danced with in this life.

A memorial celebration of Kay’s life will be held on Sunday, March 11th at 3 p.m. at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of San Francisco, 1187 Franklin Street. Contributions in Kay’s memory may be made to the Faithful Fools Street Ministry, 234 Hyde Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO GET INVOLVED, CONTACT QUIVER WATTS AT QWATTS@COHSF.ORG

Since 1989, the STREET SHEET has been an independent media organization that provides a powerful platform to homeless people to reclaim and shift narratives about homelessness in San Francisco. visit [www.cohsf.org](http://www.cohsf.org) and click “Donate Now” to help keep it that way!

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<div>BLACK HISTORY/ BLACK FUTURE MONTH</div> <div>STREET SHEET SUBMISSIONS DUE FEBRUARY 10TH TO QWATTS@COHSF.ORG</div>	FEBRUARY 3	FEBRUARY 8	FEBRUARY 9
	<div>J20 RESISTERS VICTORY PARTY!</div> <div>WHERE: E L RIO, 3158 MISSION ST @5-8PM</div> <div>Join the #J20Resisters in a victory celebration for getting the CHARGES DROPPED! \$5- \$25 sliding scale ~ All proceeds go to the #BlackPride4</div>	<div>HOMELESS PEOPLES POPULAR ASSEMBLY</div> <div>WHERE: ST. JOHN’S EVANGELIST 1661 15TH ST @11:30</div> <div>Organizing meeting for homeless and marginally housed folks to colectively strategize longterm solutions to homelessness</div>	<div>ACTIVISM IS NOT A CRIME! INT’L SOLIDARITY MISSION REPORTBACK</div> <div>WHERE: BAYANIHAN COMMUNITY CENTER 1010 MISSION ST, SAN FRANCISCO @6:30-9</div> <div>Stand with the Filipino people against the fascist U.S.-Duterte regime, and to demand Philippine President Duterte to Stop the</div>
FEBRUARY 11	FEBRUARY 11	FEBRUARY 14	FEBRUARY 18
<div>SOCIALISM &amp; THE BLACK LIBERATION STRUGGLE</div> <div>WHERE: WORKERS WORLD PARTY 1305 FRANKLIN ST, # 411, OAKLAND @1-3PM</div> <div>Hear about the fight for socialism and the struggle against white supremacy in the context of capitalism and imperialism.</div>	<div>BYSTANDER INTERVENTION TRAINING</div> <div>WHERE: 103 INTERNATIONAL BLVD, OAKLAND, CA 94606 @10AM</div> <div>Learn how to intervene in tense situations, including tactics from de-escalation strategies to some basic self-defense.</div>	<div>HOMELESS PEOPLES POPULAR ASSEMBLY</div> <div>WHERE: HOSPITALITY HOUSE, 290 TURK ST @3PM</div> <div>Organizing meeting for homeless and marginally housed folks to colectively strategize longterm solutions to homelessness.</div>	<div>COLONIZATION AND RESISTANCE PANEL AND DISCUSSION</div> <div>WHERE: OAKSTOP, 1721 BROADWAY, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94612 @1:30-4PM</div> <div>Three visionary community leaders will speak with us about the ongoing colonization of these places, and the politics and strategies of indigenous resistance.</div>

## COSTA HAWKINS FLOUNDERS IN COMMITTEE

Early on January 11 tenants and homeless activists from all over California converged on the Capitol building in Sacramento with high hopes and coffee cups in hand. After a year waiting to be heard, a repeal of Costa Hawkins would finally be publicly debated in the Housing Committee, offering a glimmer of hope that rent control might become a possibility in California cities. But that hope was smothered when the legislation failed to move out of committee, with Democrats Ed Chau and Jim Wood joining Republicans Marc Steinworth and Steven Choi in failing to support cities’ rights to make their own decisions about rent control.

In the 1970s, tenants primarily in communities of color organized to pass rent control laws in cities around the country. But the industry organized in response. Costa Hawkins was passed in 1995, making rent control illegal in any new units built in California and prohibiting cities from continuing rent control on units once they change tenancy. This means that the pool of rent-controlled units is dwindling as no new units are being protected and landlords can raise rents to market rate as soon as units are vacated. But rent control is absolutely critical to the survival of poor and working class communities in cities like San Francisco, where according to a

report by the Anti-Displacement Coalition there are 2.6 times as many rent controlled units in San Francisco as all other affordable housing units combined.

“Rent control is one of the most successful things we’ve come up with to keep housing affordable, and to keep communities housed all over the country,” said Deepa Varma, executive director of the San Francisco Tenants Union. “We are seeing an upswing in momentum, in organizing that we have not seen for decades in California, or maybe ever.”

But landlords and property management companies also came out in droves to fight the Costa Hawkins repeal effort, which has the potential to cut into their profits by protecting tenants from skyrocketing rents and keeping long-term renters in their homes. The main argument advanced by the opposition was that rent control would disincentivize the construction of new housing, construction that they argue would drive down rents in the long run.

In reality, rent control has not stopped construction in any jurisdiction where it has been tried. Housing activists also argue that if rent control laws were passed in cities, the only way a landlord could charge market rent would be to construct new

QUIVER WATTS

apartment buildings, which would encourage more construction of units.

Beyond the question of whether or not rent control stymies development is the question of who deserves to be housed. The clear answer for tenants’ rights groups is that people who have lived in their units for a long time have contributed to building social networks and communities that are worth preserving and defending. Because landlords can charge higher rents to new tenants, they are incentivized to push older, long-term tenants out, creating instability within social networks that those tenants have helped create. Tenants who are displaced are at higher risk of ending up in substandard living situations, compromising their basic needs, experiencing anxiety and depression or becoming homeless.

Costa Hawkins remains in place for now, but new campaigns are brewing around the state, with whispers of a potential ballot measure or a return to Sacramento. The real estate industry will fight hard to keep the prohibition on rent control in place, but as more and more tenants become destabilized due to the housing crisis, the movement for rent control will just keep growing. ■

## The Man with the Outstretched Hands

Every morning there was a man  
who greeted the Sun with his outstretched hand  
he greeted the sun  
just as you and I do  
to each and every loved one.

With arms raised  
held high to the sky  
eyes wide in  
jubilation and adoration  
for the warmth in the sky  
and in his eyes  
flowing all the way  
thru to his hands.

Each passerby takes notice  
Each passerby takes in

this homeless man  
no one otherwise notices  
points his hands upward  
and greets the sun and the sky  
with his outstretched hands.

One day the passersbys  
did notice  
there was no man with his outstretched hand  
instead there were flowers and a notice  
"RIP the man with the outstretched hands."

"Who will greet the Sun and implore us  
to look up to the sky and grin?"  
"When did we ever take notice  
of the sky at dawn  
except when we followed  
his hands?"

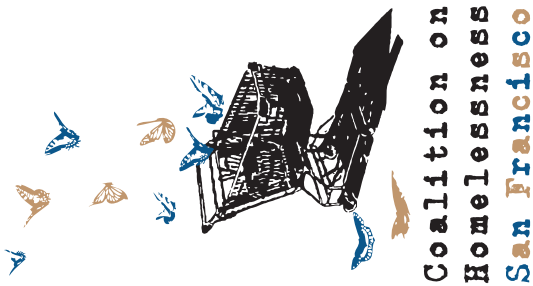
So much beauty is gone  
when we no longer take notice  
of our neighbor who greeted us  
each morning  
and reminded us  
of the warmth of the Sun and sky  
with a grin and the man  
with the outstretched hand.



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## HOME

Name: Sherard King      Age: 39  
Date: 27 January 2018  
Place: San Francisco County Jail 4  
Time without a home: 8-10 years

"I'm married, and me and my wife have been homeless together. But for the last year and a half she gotten a placed and right now (she's) in an SRO and getting ready to get her own apartment."

"For the most part (I've been living) in a tent but sometimes it's on the street – like going from bus to bus, or where I could find a nice doorway, you know pretty much the street."

"When you're homeless you never know when you're going to loose whatever little things, or a lot of things that you accumulate. That's one of the rough parts about being homeless is the constant loss, and the constant rebuilding process, the starting over. It gets to a point when you want to give up, you know?"

"Home means having a stable place to live where you're safe, you don't have to worry about someone disturbing you that you don't know. You're warm. You could wake up and go to the bathroom. You could wake up and go cook something to eat. Things of that nature"

"I know I'm going to have my own place, I know that I'm going to have my family and a place and we're all going to be happy. It's just a matter of time, I don't believe there's no hope or a chance to get a house, there is."

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This past week five of our office computers went obsolete and we do not currently have the resources to replace them. We need donations of high quality Mac desktop computers (no more than 3 years old) in order to get our office up and running again. Please email

[development@cohsf.org](mailto:development@cohsf.org) or call (415)346-3740

before bringing donations to our office. You can also donate money online by visiting our website [www.cohsf.org](http://www.cohsf.org) and clicking "Donate Now"